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ABSTRACT

This biography chronicles the life and career of Annie Webb Blanton (1870-1945), who was the first woman state superintendent of public instruction in Texas. She was elected to this post in 1918, 2 years before women were allowed to vote in general elections. Like many other young women during the 19th century, Blanton began her teaching career as a rural school teacher. While teaching, she completed requirements for an education degree from the University of Texas. Her early teaching experience influenced her ideas concerning the needs of rural schools, needs that would become a priority when she became superintendent. Blanton's ascent as a leader among Texas educators began with her election as president of the Texas State Teachers Association in 1916. She subsequently served 4 years as state superintendent of public instruction; established a career as a professor of education at the University of Texas, where she became an expert in rural education training; and founded what is now an international society for women educators, Delta Kappa Gamma. In the course of pursuing her intellectual and career goals, Blanton quickly became aware of the discrimination facing women who undertook such endeavors and of the substantial loss of potential that such discrimination creates. These experiences inspired her consistent, lifelong effort to unite competent, experienced women teachers to fight professional unfairness and improve Texas schools. Includes notes to the text, an extensive bibliography, and an index. (LP)

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